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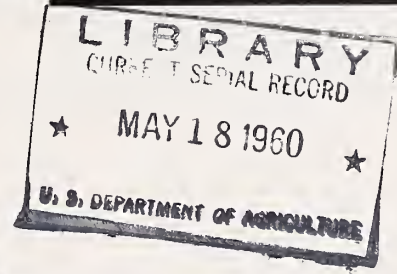
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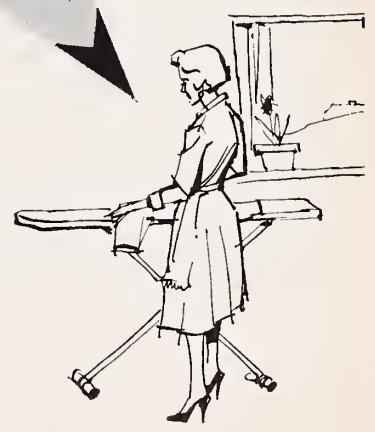
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# EXTENSION SERVICE *Review*

APRIL 1960



Office and Time Management



# EXTENSION SERVICE *Review*

Official monthly publication of  
Cooperative Extension Service:  
U. S. Department of Agriculture  
and State Land-Grant Colleges  
and Universities cooperating.

*The Extension Service Review is for Extension educators—in County, State and Federal Extension agencies—who work directly or indirectly to help people learn how to use the newest findings in agriculture and home economics research to bring about a more abundant life for themselves and their community.*

*The Review offers the Extension worker, in his role of educational leader, professional guideposts, new routes, and tools for speedier, more successful endeavor. Through this exchange of methods, tried and found successful by Extension agents, the Review serves as a source of ideas and useful information on how to reach people and thus help them utilize more fully their own resources, to farm more efficiently, and to make the home and community a better place to live.*

Vol. 31

April 1960

No. 4

Prepared in

Division of Information Programs

Federal Extension Service, USDA

Washington 25, D.C.

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## EAR TO THE GROUND

Last month I met a county agent with a problem. And I think his problem is fairly common. He just has more work than he can do.

Things were fairly quiet the first month or so on the job, this agent reported. But it didn't take him long to get acquainted with county people. Since then he has never run out of things to do. In fact, he can't find time to keep up with the increasing amount of work.

This is a problem that may get worse before it gets better. Agents are broadening the scope of their work and extending the resources of their college and the USDA to more and more people every year. As they do, the workload increases.

One obvious solution is more help. But this isn't possible in many cases. So agents will have to look for other resources to get the job done. And one good place to look may be right at home—in the county office.

There's an old expression that sometimes we're too close to the woods to see the trees. Maybe we're so close to the solution to our problem that we don't recognize it.

The experience of a Dakota rancher points this up. Seems the rancher went to the Denver Livestock Show a few years ago to buy

the best Angus bull he could find. In Denver, he looked over all the fine stock, made his purchase and proudly took his new bull home. But he felt a little sheepish about the whole deal. He found out that the bull he had bought at considerable travel and shipping expense was raised in his home county. He could have solved his problem by just looking around home.

Maybe there is a lesson here for all of us. If we look around right at home—in our own office—we may find some ways to help solve this apparent shortage of time.

Good management is the answer, of course. We need to use a problem-solving approach—the same approach farm families use to operate efficiently. We need to add up our resources, determine the problem areas, look over the possible solutions. Then we can select the solutions that will help us do our jobs better.

This issue contains many ideas that other extension workers have used in improving office and time management. Many deal with office layout, equipment, and techniques. And many also touch on the most important resource in the office—the people who use the equipment. Good office relations are the root of good office management.—EHR

The Extension Service Review is published monthly by direction of the Secretary of Agriculture as administrative information required for the proper transaction of the public business. The printing of this publication has been approved by the Bureau of the Budget (June 26, 1958).

The Review is issued free by law to workers engaged in extension activities. Others may obtain copies from the Superintendent of Documents, Government Printing Office, Washington 25, D.C., at 15 cents per copy or by subscription at \$1.50 a year, domestic, and \$2.25, foreign.



# Nerve Center of Extension

by EDWIN L. KIRBY,  
Assistant Director, Ohio



THE office is the "nerve center" for Extension. Through the county office, most direct contact is made with the people we serve. Through this office the results of research and the teachings of our land-grant institutions are centered on the problems of people. First and lasting impressions are made here through office calls, telephone calls, letters, and mass media.

Extension has an expanding program and clientele but limited resources of personnel, facilities, and finance. So we must manage and use our "nerve center" in the most efficient manner.

Have our office management procedures kept pace with the modern principles and practices used in industry? Are the practices we use in keeping with the expanded program and clientele we serve?

## *Staff Requisites*

The first essential for efficient office management is a well qualified, adequately trained, and properly organized staff. The staff members in any office must know their jobs. And they must perform their responsibilities so that the total work can be done efficiently and with the highest degree of satisfaction.

In any office where more than one person is working on a common program, one person must provide the initiative and leadership for discussing common problems, for making plans to complete the work, and for assigning priorities. This principle becomes increasingly important as the number of professional staff members increases faster than the secretarial staff.

In county offices, the agent designated as the chairman or director

must assume leadership for efficient office management. An accepted administrative principle states that persons affected by a decision should be involved in the formulation of that decision. This simply says that the county chairman will arrange situations so that both professional and clerical staff members may discuss and be informed of conditions of joint concern to them. The chairman exerts his influence primarily through leadership rather than direction.

The professional extension worker should not be performing tasks which can be done more efficiently and economically by a secretary. The clerical staff must be carefully selected and trained if this condition is to be met. The staff chairman has this responsibility—either by providing the training or by requesting help from his supervisor or other sources.

The professional staff member also needs training in office management principles and procedures if he is to recognize the need for and provide training situations for the secretarial staff. The practice of laboriously writing correspondence in longhand is as outdated as the horse and buggy.

## *Arrangement and Equipment*

Proper arrangement is the second essential to efficient office management. Does the atmosphere created by both orderly arrangement and qualified personnel say to the caller a warm "Hello," "May I help you?" "Glad to see you," "Come back again"? Is the secretary located and trained so that she can fulfill this requirement?

Are the desks and other facilities

arranged for orderly and efficient work with distraction kept to a minimum? Are the files arranged and organized for maximum use not only for *filing* but for *finding* information? Do the physical facilities provide privacy, proper light, ventilation, heat, and other conditions necessary for comfort and efficient performance?

A third essential for efficient office management is modern equipment. Adequate and good equipment, teamed with efficient secretaries, is necessary for proper handling of the volume of business in an extension office.

Most Ohio extension offices now have electric typewriters, electric mimeographs, and addressographs. Many have dictating machines, adding machines, letter folders and tape recorders. These and other labor-saving items increase efficiency.

## *Space and Location*

Adequate space and proper location are becoming more important to an expanding staff and program. Many of our clientele form lasting impressions of extension personnel and program upon casual contact with the office. We cannot justify crowded, cluttered offices located in basements or other areas not easily accessible to the public.

Extension is big business in program, in numbers of people served, in finance, and in professional stature. We can afford only the most modern offices—with adequate space, accessible location, proper equipment, qualified staff, and a modern, effective office arrangement which promotes efficient procedures.

# Manage Time to Save Time

by STELLA MITCHELL, Federal Extension Service

How can we manage time to save time? This is a challenging subject and I have no panacea. But let's do some stock-taking. Let's take a look at managerial principles and their application to available and potential resources.

We can start with the premise that our job is to sell ideas—ideas that are important, that are meaningful to people. To improve our ability to sell ideas, we should think about management of our resources.

"Management is deciding what we wish to achieve and which resources we shall use to achieve it," says the September 1959 issue of *FORECAST FOR HOME ECONOMICS*. "Management consists of a series of decisions making up the process of using resources to achieve goals."

In simple words, management is the reasoned, thoughtful way of using resources to get what we desire. It is a basic part of everything we do. It underlies all our activities.

Good management never aims solely at reaching the end of any job. Rather it aims at the motives, decisions, and resources used to finish it,

the efficiency of their use, and the quality of the completed job.

Now, let's think about how we can better manage one of the most important resources—time.

Time is not guaranteed to serve us, but is made available to us. It is not given to us to spend but to invest.

Time has two dimensions—hours and energy. If we waste one, we waste the other. If we use one wisely, we enhance the value of the other.

But some things interfere with the



Store Time

our work, we also have energy of the spirit.

It is not easy to manage these forms of energy as we encounter many obstacles. *Frustration* may be decreased by turning to another task. *Irritation* we need to learn to ignore. *Impatience* wastes energy and can be avoided by keeping busy. *Worry* is the worst enemy because it is malignant—it grows and spreads and poisons all forms of our energy.

How can our time be used more efficiently? We *purchase time*—by telephone, mail, taxis, equipment, travel, and services. We *make time* when we save it through wise planning, short cuts, or especially efficient methods or procedures. Tag-ends of time—waiting for meals, trains, etc.—can serve us if we make preparation for their use.

And we can *store time*. Time is the most perishable commodity in the world, yet it is possible to store it. Taking notes, for example, is an easy and effective way of storing time.

The most common waste of mental energy, as well as of time, is aimless thinking while doing routine or mechanical tasks. Why not focus on some special problem while our hands are busy.

Our subconscious mind is a full-time servant. Much of the best brain work is done while hands are busy. Ideas are born. Solutions to problems  
(See *Save Time*, page 76)



Make Time

way we use our time. We *procrastinate*—which is largely a matter of indecision. *Sometime* is often an interference. We *excuse our inactions* as to why we don't do certain things. And then we *regret* that our time was not used to best advantage.

Since time and energy are twin commodities, we must understand the forms of energy before we can make intelligent use of our time. We all have physical, mental, and nervous energy. Conservation of nervous energy is one of the main keys to intelligent time use. And if we enjoy



Buy Time



# WHAT MAKES AN EFFICIENT OFFICE?

by **MARVIN C. DOBBS**, *Dunklin  
County Agent, Missouri*

**O**FFICE management is a broad subject. And its evaluation is difficult. Management is not static. It is always in the process of change. So there is no sure-fire formula for office efficiency.

Extension action is planned and organized in the county office. It is here that meetings are planned; news stories, radio and television programs, and visual aids are prepared; and demonstrations are developed.

## *Importance of Planning*

An organized arrangement and timing of actions to accomplish a desired goal are characteristic of modern extension office management.

Planning will help develop the best way to accomplish a desired result, considering quality, speed, cost, and the effects. Accomplishment of most objectives depends on adequate planning.

In planning work, we must answer three simple questions. What are we doing? Do we really need to do it? Can we do it better another way?

A person with no special training can ask himself these questions. But the more he knows, the better will be his answers. Knowing how others have met problems often helps extension personnel adapt to particular work conditions.

Planning should take place before doing. Most individual and group efforts are made more effective by determining ahead of time what shall be done and where, when, how, and who shall do it.

Some goals are achieved with relatively little planning—they are left to chance. Others require definite efforts toward an objective. Achievement of an objective depends on the total contribution of each worker and depends on all working together.

## *Office Relations*

Human relations in the county extension office are important. And as the number of workers increases, relationship problems also increase. Number of workers, however, is not the only factor affecting office relationships. Successful planning, organization, and execution of more extension programs require the close cooperation of several persons. It takes teamwork to make the extension program successful.

Other important factors are preparation of the budget, getting approval from administrative and appropriating bodies, and controlling expenditures. Employing and administering a clerical staff is also a factor. And there is the important job of maintaining good public opinion so people will be strong supporters of extension work. These things are functions of management.

One of the first jobs in bringing about better relationships is for each worker to know and understand his own as well as the joint responsibilities of his associates. The weekly office conference provides an opportunity for developing and maintaining this understanding.

Excellent management demands that all extension personnel work together in harmony, free from strains and serious friction. Each must pursue his own special task, but be conscious of the joint endeavor.

## *Blueprinting Jobs*

For efficiency, each agent must know his responsibilities. Each agent should know his individual duties, the things on which all staff members should work together, what each agent can do in supporting another worker, and those things in which all

agents have an interest, but which one person can carry out for the entire staff. This last job requires careful consideration. It includes such things as preparing, obtaining approval, and administering the county budget; and representing the county extension office on committees.

## *Weekly Conferences*

The best way to reach these decisions and gain understanding is through the weekly office conference.

To bring about full understanding of the overall county program by all personnel, regular office conferences are essential. Here all staff members have an opportunity to clarify and explain duties and responsibilities, to plan work, and to strive for a better understanding and distribution of the workload.

Definite decisions should be reached on as many matters as possible. The weekly office conference will eliminate some of the "little" conferences during the week.

Conferences help keep the staff fully informed of each other's activities and how agents can render mutual assistance. It helps to coordinate the work so the program will be conducted on a unified and sound basis.

Preparation and management of the county extension budget is important. Financial needs of the extension office should be carefully considered at staff conferences. Then agreement can be reached on the recommendations for the finance committee and the appropriating body.

## *Summary of Factors*

Office management is always in the process of change. Planning is needed to develop the best way to accomplish a desired result.

Teamwork is essential. And each agent must know his individual and joint responsibilities.

Regular office conferences are needed to coordinate the work in a unified effort. Careful preparation and good management of the county budget is essential.

As pointed out earlier, there is no formula for office efficiency. If there was, it certainly would include these factors.





## GOOD MORNING, MAY I HELP YOU?

by FOWLER A. YOUNG, *Clay County Agent, Missouri*

**O**UR secretary usually speaks first when office callers enter. Her cheery greeting, especially when she is able to include his name, denotes a warm and courteous welcome.

Just as important is the quick question that follows, May I help you? In doing so, she sets the tempo and takes command. Usually the caller answers by stating what he wants rather than who he wants to see. This enables the secretary to direct him to the proper staff member without question or embarrassment.

Office callers have learned to accept information as factual regardless of which staff member presents it. That's one phase of extension office efficiency.

### *Operation Lesson*

Before Operation Lesson (explained later) 75 percent of the callers spoke first. Most of them said, "I want to see the county agent." And most of them were not satisfied with answers unless they came directly from the county agent or the home agent. That was not efficiency.

Our first real look at ourselves—staff and office efficiency wise—was a staff conference in January 1951. With our sponsoring group's facilities committee, we did a lot of what later became known as brainstorming. This was the forerunner of a

series of sessions resulting in a 5-year plan for equipping ourselves and the office.

We dubbed these planning sessions Operation Lesson. The six letters L-E-S-S-O-N mean Let's Equip Staff, Start Operating Now!

### *Early Problems*

Before Operation Lesson, the Clay County staff included a county agent, a home agent, an assistant county agent, and one underpaid, overworked secretary. Office facilities consisted of poorly arranged office space partially filled with hand-me-down furniture and equipment.

Our most difficult task was to sell ourselves on the idea that drastic changes must be made if we were to have an effective program. Our sponsoring group and other county leaders, as well as members of the County Court who later provided necessary money, were much easier to convince than ourselves once the plan was known.

The cost of the equipment in the plan amounted to several thousand dollars. It included a multitude of small items to be placed within the reach of each staff member. And it included such large items as storage cabinets, files, dictating equipment, addressograph, wide carriage typewriter, electric typewriter, fluorescent lighting, table slide viewer, mas-

ter exhaust fan, series of reference books, tape recorder, folding machine, farm levels, public address system, electric mimeograph, and numerous pieces of equipment for use in conducting method demonstrations.

A few of these things, according to the plan, were to be purchased each year for a 5-year period. Priority was given to things needed most.

### *Plan for Financing*

We were short on one thing—money. The plan for raising it, however, was included in minute detail.

Briefly, here was the money raising plan. It was followed and it worked. Every piece of equipment was purchased and put in operation on or before schedule.

1. Involve the sponsoring group plus a few outstanding leaders in the plan preparation.

2. Make it clear and keep it understood that the objectives are to serve more efficiently rather than to make it easier for the staff.

3. Let the sponsoring group and leaders carry the message to the proper authorities for appropriation of funds.

The 5-year plan in Clay County has never ended, even though it began 9 years ago. Each year it is revised and another year is added.

Many other important things have been added since the end of the first 5 years—three cameras, additional files, chairs and desks, completely equipped dark room, completely remodeled soil testing laboratory. Oh yes, this year air conditioning and an FM radio are being installed.

Do all these items pay? Do the people who pay the taxes appreciate and approve the change since Operation Lesson? Has the extension staff grown and do they appreciate the available facilities? And finally, has the county program improved and grown? The answer to all of these is yes.

Comparing the records of the 2 years just previous to Operation Lesson with the last 2 years, here are the results. Office calls increased 194 percent, telephone calls 357 percent. In spite of this increased activity in the office, farm and home visits by agents increased 136 percent. News stories published increased 206 percent, bulletins dis-



tributed increased 184 percent, and radio and television scripts increased 740 percent.

Leader training meetings increased 84 percent and attendance at these meetings increased 153 percent. All other meetings decreased 9 percent, but it's interesting to note that the attendance at the smaller number of meetings shows an increase of 69 percent.

Circular letters issued were up 61 percent, with the total number of copies up 98 percent. And the number of individual letters increased 521 percent.

This increased volume of the extension staff's effort does not reflect increase in practice adoption. But leaders in the county will tell you that it, too, has increased in comparative amounts.

It takes more than good equipment and adequate office space to make a county extension program click. Staff or office personnel management is probably more important.

Every person in our office is an important staff member and is regarded as such. Each person has a definite part in the county program—and knows what it is. Each knows to whom he is responsible. Clear and complete understanding on these matters is necessary if the entire staff is to work and go forward as a team.

On our staff, the county agent serves as the chairman. His number one job is to have a clear cut con-

ception of his job and to see that all staff members, including the secretaries, are well informed on extension objectives.

The agent handles administrative matters and gives special attention to public relations, public affairs, general news, and overall programing. He delegates responsibilities and then doesn't interfere.

The home agent takes the lead with the home economics program and shares a portion of the 4-H club program. One associate county agent takes the lead in the balanced farming program and a second associate agent takes the lead in the 4-H club program.

The two secretaries have the re-

sponsibility for secretarial and clerical work. All such work is channeled from the agents to the secretary in charge. Then she divides the work.

Staff conferences are a must. They enable all members to stay abreast of the overall county program and permit the exchange of ideas and help.

We also have a number of unwritten yet clearly defined rules. They include such things as agents keeping out of the files, each person lending a helping hand in an emergency, treating individual differences confidentially until resolved, and individuals discharging responsibility to reflect unity and sincerity of purpose for the county program as a whole.

### *Lasting Impressions*

Callers at an extension office today are influenced by the things they see, the things they hear, and the way they feel while there. They can't help but compare the visits they made in other places on that same day.

At every other stop—the bank, the attorney's office, drug store, and perhaps the restaurant—it was cool and comfortable, employees were neat, friendly, and courteous. They exhibited qualities of good salesmanship. Efficiency was in evidence everywhere. We want them to have the same reaction when they walk in the extension office.

Operation Lesson was an important series of sessions in Clay County. We learned and are still learning many lessons from it.



In just a few seconds Home Agent Grace Wright can get out the portable sewing machine and demonstrate to a homemaker.



Staff conference is a must in Clay County, Mo. Left to right are Mrs. Marie Hall, secretary; Stanley Hoit, associate county agent; Fowler A. Young, county agent; Jack West, associate county agent; Mrs. Grace Wright, home agent; and Mrs. Shirley Kinder, home agent trainee.

# Meeting the Demands for Time

by MRS. CATHERINE VAN MARION, Conway  
County Home Demonstration Agent, Arkansas

NEVER have there been more demands upon the extension worker's time—Farm and Home Development, rural community improvement, community 4-H clubs, special interest groups, urban interests, professional improvement. All these responsibilities make us concerned about whether we make the best use of our time. We must allot it carefully because we have such a wide range of activities.

If we're going to help farm families make management decisions, we have to learn to make some for ourselves, using all our resources and alternatives.

Just as the family approach works in carrying out the agricultural and home program in the county, it can apply in our own management. The weekly office conference for our entire county staff is an invaluable means of planning.

## Work Agenda

Schedules of regular meetings, 4-H, home demonstration, farm organization, and rural community improvement are discussed and each of us notes these meetings and who will attend. For county 4-H meetings, rural community, and other joint meetings, we share responsibilities including contacting leaders who will assist. Working together and sharing jobs help to keep us all aware of the entire extension program and the goals we have.

The county agent, associate agent, and I rotate the radio programs weekly. Announcements of meetings are a regular part of these programs in addition to timely subject matter.

The associate county agent works primarily with Farm and Home Development families. To assist families with their problems, he frequently confers with the county and home agents on the families' progress.

Sometimes information can be

given by sending a bulletin, writing a letter, or calling. But if a homemaker wants help in planning a kitchen, redecorating, refinishing furniture, making draperies, landscaping, or other similar problems, the home agent plans a visit. If the visit requires both agents, we find a time convenient for both and then contact the family to set the time. About one-fourth of the home agent's time is spent working with these families.

## Routine Assignments

Our office secretary takes care of all office duties. To help her we plan ahead as far as possible for letters, mimeographing, orders for material, etc. At office conference we decide when letters should be mailed, mimeographed material should be ready, reports be prepared, etc.

As a receptionist, the secretary saves agents much time. She is courteous to all visitors and can help those that come in for a bulletin or information that doesn't require an agent's attention. When agents are out, she records office and phone calls and places them on the agent's desk. We can take care of requests easily this way.

When an agent leaves the office, he tells the secretary where he's going and when he expects to return. This helps her answer telephone and office calls as well as keeps us all informed on activities.

## Bolstering Leaders

Leaders are an agent's right arm. A leader program is the strength of an organization for many reasons, but time spent in developing and training leaders in 4-H and home demonstration clubs pays off in multiples.

The eight community and two parochial school 4-H Clubs in Conway

County each have two or more adult local leaders. A leaders' council assists in planning and carrying out county events. Quarterly training meetings help them with demonstrations, projects, records, and other phases of the 4-H program.

Leader-training meetings for the home demonstration leaders are held each month. In Conway County the subject matter information given is for the following month.

Various teaching methods are used such as method demonstrations, flip charts, flannelgraphs, discussions, questionnaires, and illustrated talks. Usually more is given at the leader meeting than they will use so that individual leaders can adapt the teaching to the needs and wants of their own communities.

## Share Program

Leaders know they are entirely responsible for giving this information and that if the home agent is present she will contribute another part of the program. For instance, in February home management leaders discussed pots and pans—pointing out different designs and materials, their characteristics, and uses. The home agent attended 8 of 20 meetings and discussed different coffee makers, methods of brewing, designs, and materials.

County subject matter leaders assist the home agent in planning and conducting these meetings. Specialists give assistance in gathering information, planning ways of presenting it, and evaluation. Office conferences and correspondence with specialists can save time for both the agent and specialist. Of the 8 to 12 meetings held each year, a specialist or business home economist usually conducts one.

Do we make the best use of our time? I know most of us spend more than we should on some things and (See *Demands for Time*, page 70)





The author (center) looks over visual equipment which helps agents work their plans.

## Plan the Work and Work the Plan

by R. H. McDougall, *Butler County Agricultural Agent, Pennsylvania*

EXTENSION has changed and so has agriculture. And one noticeable change in Extension has been in planning and procedure in county offices. This work has grown along with all other phases of the extension program.

Thirty years ago the Butler County extension office had one county agent, one office secretary, and one home economics worker who served three counties. Whether those were the "good old days" may be beside the point but certainly the office then was a quiet place compared to now. At present our offices house four agricultural agents, two extension home economists, and three secretaries.

In the late '20's and early '30's our work consisted largely of community meetings and individual farm visits. Now, with rapid changes in agriculture and in urbanization of the county, the work has grown and methods for doing it have had to change. Countywide extension activities have multiplied along with the number of organizations we serve.

Now we rely more on mass media to reach our expanding audience. In-

creased use is made of newspapers, radio, and circular letters.

Competent office secretaries, devoted to serving people, have become indispensable to a successful program. Planned office procedure is vital. The secretary is a part of the year's program from its inception.

In December, she enters in a ledger the proposed meetings, demonstrations, and other organized work—both community and countywide. She sends out publicity, records results, and finally aids in the preparation of the annual report. Another member of the secretarial staff serves as receptionist, cuts stencils, and prepares news releases for mailing. The third does mimeographing, filing, addressographing, and general correspondence.

Our aim is to have the office operate efficiently with a minimum of direction. This frees the professional staff for other work. Incidentally, the ledger kept by the secretary and the posting sheets for tallying office and phone calls provide a rather complete record of our work for the year.

Each Monday morning agents and

home economists meet to rough out the work for the week. Following this conference the office force is briefed on the week's schedule for all workers. This helps to assure that important matters will be carried out and a minimum of details will be overlooked.

Correspondence and news (with its deadline) get a preference but mail announcements of meetings also demand prompt attention.

### *Routine Equipment*

It has taken years of careful budgeting and the full support of our county executive committee to accumulate the various pieces of equipment, including visuals, that are so important in our work.

One of our key equipment items is the electric typewriter. With it we can make clear and clean mimeographed material. It enables us also to make single runs of 14 legible copies of our twice-a-week news budget. These run to two full newspaper columns each and are prepared and mailed each Wednesday and Friday to 13 news outlets. One copy is kept in the office file. Three manual typewriters also see regular use.

An electric mimeograph is important with us also. An electric addressograph is on order to replace our hand operated one. Files of the news releases, circular letters, and schedules of previous years serve as news reminders.

Other equipment includes: a plate cutting machine, a 64-drawer plate cabinet, stencil cabinet, and mimeoscope used in preparing illustrations. An electric folding machine is another timesaver. An inexpensive dictating machine greatly reduces the time required for correspondence.

Other helpful equipment includes two tape recorders, two 4x5 press cameras, two 35 mm. cameras, a 16 mm. movie camera, three slide projectors, two 16 mm. sound projectors, a silent 16 mm. movie projector, three screens, and a dark room for use if time permits.

Many things contribute to efficient management of the county extension office. In Butler County, an important first step is to plan our work. Then, with good personnel and equipment, we work our plan.

# Stretch Your Equipment Dollars

by J. L. AMSBAUGH, *Secretary and Leader, Business Operations, Ohio*

**D**o you have trouble stretching your budget for office equipment? Perhaps government surplus equipment can help solve your problem.

During the past 3 years, 57 Ohio counties have acquired Federal surplus property which was originally worth \$60,000. The dollar outlay involved only a "transfer charge" of \$3,720 or 6.2 percent of the original cost of the property to the Federal government.

The program in Ohio is administered by the State Agency for Property Utilization, a section of the State Department of Education.

To initiate the program for Extension, the author was appointed official representative. He transacts all business with the Department of Education pertaining to the transfer of property to the 88 county extension offices.

## *Purchasing Steps*

Here are the procedures. The official representative requests a scheduled date (one day per month) and provides names of agents and counties (not to exceed 10 on any single date). Next he reports to the central warehouse in Columbus on the scheduled date and signs receipts for all property transferred. The official representative arranges for removal of items on day of selection, processes all required forms, maintains accurate inventory records by counties, and abides by regulations, agreements, and restrictions of the Department of Education.

To evaluate the program, a questionnaire was mailed to each county and the data analyzed in cooperation with our Office of Extension Research and Training. Replies were received from 76 of the 88 counties—an 86 percent response.

We wanted to determine: some factors relating to nonattendance, satisfaction with the program and

procedures, items desired, and suggestions for improving the system.

Here are some of the reasons for nonattendance:

Distance to Columbus warehouse. (Up to 220 miles.)

Difficulty in transporting items. (A large truck is often required.)

Reports from others about poor condition of equipment don't justify the time involved. (Items offered range from obsolete to new equipment. A full day's time is involved.)

No items needed at this time. (We are glad to have this response. It indicates a well-equipped county office that should result in efficiency.)

Thirteen percent of the agents indicated they were very satisfied with the system and 47 percent said they were satisfied. Only 14 percent replied that they were not very satisfied and the other 26 percent did not respond.

Their comments included:

Didn't have what we needed day we attended.

Don't know how it could be improved.

Satisfied with what we acquired, but little available was of use to us.

Agents' preferences for items ranked as follows: office machines and furniture, 35 percent; office supplies, 18 percent; files, 17 percent; tools, 12 percent; and miscellaneous, 14 percent.

## *Ideas for Improvement*

Suggestions for improving the system included:

Like to have more time for making selections. (Under current practices 2 hours are allowed for inspection and 3 hours for selection.)

Permit one agent to represent several counties. (All items are transferred on an "as is" basis and all acquisitions are final. It is unlikely that many agents would care to delegate responsibility for decisions to another agent.)

Show transfer charge of all items. (Now being done for most items.)

File requests for specific items and have stored for pick-up next selection date. (Items are moved in and out daily. A particular county is generally assigned not more than three dates annually. This idea is perhaps desirable but not feasible.)

Display items in more orderly fashion. (Much improvement has been made. Small items are in steel bins. Similar items are now grouped together in a large warehouse.)

Improve quality of items. (This is beyond the control of the State Agency for Property Utilization. They must accept all items declared surplus. On any given day the condition of typewriters might be poor while desks might be excellent. The following day the situation might be reversed.)

Give each agent an order blank and let him write his own. (This would result in confusion. The present mechanics of handling are systematic, accurate, accepted good business procedure, and highly satisfactory except from the viewpoint of an unusually impatient person.)

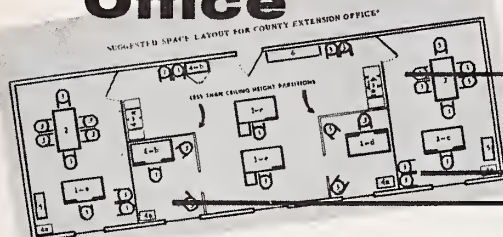
## *Favorable Reactions*

The business and management aspects are handled satisfactorily. (Ohio receives and disburses all county funds through the State office. Thus, the transfer charge for surplus property is processed the same as all other county bills. Within a few days after selection, the writer provides each agent involved with a complete record of items acquired, unit transfer charge, and total transfer charge to be entered against his county funds. All but expendable items are added to the county inventory record maintained by the State office.)

The above involved about 1 day of the author's time, plus the day spent (*See Stretch Dollars, page 76*)



# Equipping the County Office



by ERNEST J. NESIUS, Associate Director, Kentucky

**I**F you were starting a county extension office from scratch and had to equip it, what would you purchase? What priorities would you assign equipment items for this office?

If you were asked to equip the office with bare essentials, and then were asked to specify the optimum, what would you say? You might ask, "How would you define optimum?"

An oversimplified definition is an office equipped to make for maximum effectiveness of the time, energy, and knowledge of a county extension staff. Effectiveness would have to be judged by comparing efficiency in the use of time with effectiveness of accomplishment so that the supervisor, the county extension council, and local people all agree that the agents are operating in an optimum way. So it's a matter of judgment.

## Needs vs Wants

Beyond the so-called optimum point, there are some kinds of equipment that would be desirable under certain circumstances—for example, rugs on the floor. Other items may bring comfort and pleasantness to the office but may or may not bring about a corresponding increase in effectiveness in carrying out the job.

For our county extension office, we will assume an average office with an average demand for assistance from the people in the county.

Any elaboration on items of equip-

ment for the county extension office could bring about argument on many points. Knowing that we are on ground where difference of opinion will be marked, let's walk out on it.

## Items to Consider

Let's assume four groupings for our office equipment. Let's call Group I the list of bare essentials for a county office where there is a county agent, a home agent, and a secretary. As the number of agents in a single office increases, the effect will be greater amounts rather than different kinds.

Group II is a list of highly desirable equipment that will add much to the efficiency and effectiveness of the county extension unit. Group III includes desirable items which can be justified where the program is of sufficient size. Group IV is items to meet special needs.

Left off the lists are such things as rugs, overstuffed furniture, and draperies. While these have some value under certain circumstances, there is some doubt that they add much to the general effectiveness of the extension unit.

### Group I

Executive-type desks and chairs for agents  
Secretary's desk and chair  
Typewriter  
2 side chairs for each agent's desk  
3 to 4 filing cabinets with alphabetical guide cards  
Telephone

Adequate lighting  
Storage cabinets  
Cupboards or closets  
Mimeograph machine and stand  
Electric fans  
Waste basket for each desk  
Bulletin display rack  
Slide projector, screen  
Costumer  
Outside office sign  
Desk organizer for each desk  
Chalk board  
Chart stand  
Miscellaneous small equipment such as stapler, punch, pencil sharpener, dictionary, file boxes, ash trays, poster-making equipment, desk pens

### Group II

Mimeoscope  
Soils laboratory and equipment  
Addressograph  
Partitions for private offices  
Adding machine  
Conference table  
Cameras—35 mm. and 1-minute print  
Flannelboard  
Flip chart  
Name plates  
Extension telephones  
Additional files  
Additional side chairs

### Group III

Tape recorder  
Public address system  
More folding chairs and folding tables  
Motion picture projector (sound)  
Overhead projector  
Kitchen and equipment  
Air conditioner

### Group IV

Letter folder  
Letter sealer  
Intercom  
Dictating equipment  
Opaque projector  
Record player

Every office should appear attractive and the equipment should be of uniform or matching materials. The office should have a pleasant and businesslike appearance to the visiting public.

The county office is the front office and reception room of the Cooperative Extension Service. The image it creates is one that all of us must wear. If the county extension agents are to be the county leaders, they will need offices and equipment that parallel the notion of leadership.



# TIPS TO SAVE

should read, he clips it, pastes it on bond paper, types his own comments in the margin, runs it through a photostat machine, and sends it out to people he thinks would benefit. For example, he sends bankers articles on economic or farm policies.

## TIME-SAVING PACKAGE

Dick Hoover, 4-H farm advisor in Fresno County, Calif., has developed a way of saving time at electric project leader training meetings. It can be adapted to other projects where several items are to be distributed at the meeting.



In the electric project, 24 tiny pieces of equipment are needed. Instead of passing these out one by one at the meetings, Hoover places the tiny parts in sacks before the meeting. This saves time and avoids loss of the small items.

## EQUIPPED FOR ACTION

Agent Matthew Sexton, Choctaw County, Ala., carries his camera and tape recorder on every farm visit. He frequently obtains pictures for use by local dailies and weeklies.

Sexton also picks up interviews and meetings of interest to the local radio station. On-the-spot recordings have high listener interest.

## APPLE BOX FILING

The apple box system of filing is popular in Madera County, Calif. The simple system was developed by Farm Advisor Ed Libra for use by individuals who don't usually keep records.

An empty apple box is used to keep four folders labeled income, expense, depreciation, and inventory. Receipts, sales slips, and other records are put in the folder during the year. This simple system has proved a good way of getting farmers started on a more complete recordkeeping system.

## AUTOMATIC WEATHER SERVICE

Detailed daily weather information is an important need in the Mississippi Delta area. Tunica County, an important cotton producing county, has no radio station.



County Agent Hayes Farish and the board of supervisors solved the problem with a teletype machine, connected with the weather service at Stoneville. To relay the information to farmers, an automatic telephone answering device was installed. Weather forecasts are put on the automatic device three times daily and are available to farmers 24 hours a day.

## MANAGEMENT SHORT CUTS

New Mexico Editor John White reports many time saving techniques by State and county workers.

One specialist travels in his private plane to speed up county visits. (He is reimbursed at automobile road mileage.) . . . The Chaves County office has an intercom system. . . . Several offices have large calendars showing all dates of the year at a glance. Meetings and other dates are marked in different colors.

One county office uses an electric collator to assemble mimeographed materials. . . . Other counties use collating racks for assembling several pages of material. . . . Electric staplers are a time saver for stapling large quantities of materials.

## PERSONAL TOUCH

Agent George Vapaa, Kent Co., Del., has a good technique for keeping key people informed on new ideas and trends. When George finds an article that he thinks local leaders



# TIME

## HALL DISPLAY

Visitors to the Lyon County, Kans. extension office have to walk down a long, narrow hall. Agent R. Stanley Parsons decided to make use of the wall space.

Bulletin boards now hang on both sides of the hall, with publications grouped by subject matter. More than 300 bulletins can be displayed at one time. And bulletin distribution increased greatly, Parson reports, when the new system was installed.

## BRANCH OFFICE

Farmers in southeast Tillman County, Okla., often didn't contact County Agent Laxton Malcolm about their problems. Distance to the county seat was one reason.

So Malcolm set up a branch office one day a week in that part of the county. A farmers cooperative offered free desk space and telephone privileges.

The local paper cooperates by announcing the new office service. When it's known in advance that the county agent can't be present on the scheduled day, the newspaper passes the word along to farmers.

## DIRECT LINE BROADCAST

Agent Burton Olson, Benton County Minn., has a direct wire radio broadcast from his office at Foley to the St. Cloud station. He broadcasts a 5-minute program at noon, 5 days a week.

## URBAN AND RURAL OFFICES

A downtown office and a second one in a rural town 15 miles away give maximum extension service to the people of Hinds County, Miss. County Agent Graham L. Hales and his secretary man an office near the center of Jackson, a city of 160,000.

Home Agent Mary Gardner, three

men assistant agents, and an assistant home agent are located in a small town near the geographical center of the county. This is handy for farm people.

When his office was remodeled a couple years ago, Agent Hales put in a soundproof tape recording booth. This makes high quality recordings



possible, without outside interference. And farmers interviewed here are more at ease than in a commercial studio.

## MAILING LIST KEY

In Kalkaska County, Mich., Agent Reuben Kaarre developed a key punch card system to keep his mailing list up to date. Rather than repeat the same name on several mailing lists, each farmer has one card. The card gives the address, description of property, farm enterprises, etc.

Each card is punched along the edge. If a name is desired on a certain mailing list, that hole is punched out. It takes only seconds to key out any mailing list desired. Changes are easily made by adding or removing cards.

## TELEPHONE CONFERENCE

Iron County, Mich., community development study committee members and campus-based specialists recently held a successful telephone conference. Specialist Abe Snyder reports that the telephone company provides special equipment and rates for the time and money-saving conferences.

Michigan State University campus is nearly 500 miles from Iron County. Specialists drive up every 5 or 6

weeks for workshops with committee members. Between specialist visits, committee chairmen attend breakfast meetings which include the phone conference with campus consultants.

## PLANT BULLETIN BOARD

In Oklahoma City, Okla., County Agent Harry James and his staff worked out an arrangement with a meat packing plant to distribute extension publications. In a few months, 2500 bulletins were distributed.

Publications were exhibited in the credit union lobby and those wanting copies had to request them. The exhibit board was changed frequently, to keep topics timely.

## CHECK-OUT CHALKBOARD

Visitors to the Marengo County, Ala., office can learn immediately where an agent is and when he will return. A chalkboard hangs on the

NAME	WHERE	RETURN
Jones	Demopolis	3:00 P.M.
Mayberry	Themaston	NOON
Miller	Sweetwater	5:00 P.M.
Weaver	Jefferson	4:30 P.M.
Hendrix	Sardis	5:00 P.M.
Weston	Nanafalia	5:00 P.M.

wall near the door. When an agent goes out in the county, he writes down his destination and return time. Then he doesn't have to interrupt the secretary's work to leave word where he is going.

## SOLVING STORAGE PROBLEMS

Storage is a problem in many county offices. In Barton County, Kans., Agent Paul Wilson and his staff have solved some of their storage problems.

Each agent has a steel bookcase with adjustable shelves. This keeps reference books within an arm's reach. And each agent has a desk filing drawer for personal reference material.

(See Time-Saving Tips, page 78)

# Organized for Efficiency

by WILLIAM RUPP, *Kent County Extension Director, Michigan*

SEVERAL years ago the Kent County Extension staff arrived at a point where we needed an overall review of management principles. Several new agents had been added to the staff. This called for additional secretarial help, an increase in budgets and supplies, and larger quarters.

The office is located in Grand Rapids, the second largest city in Michigan. Kent County has a population of about 300,000 but is one of the most important agricultural counties in the State. The major sources of farm income are dairying, crops, and tree fruit.

The extension office was located on the third floor of the Court House. This was inconvenient because of poor arrangement and no room for parking.

The office location was discussed with the county board of supervisors and they became interested in relocating the Extension Service away from downtown Grand Rapids. A building on the county hospital grounds (two miles from the business area) was vacated and remodeled. Fortunately, the building lent itself nicely to our needs.

Nothing happens by itself. Increased efficiency in office procedure, including the allocation of time and energies, means not only setting up a procedure, but constant follow-through to see that procedures are carried out. We studied secretarial workloads and analyzed secretarial requirements of each agent.

## *Division of Duties*

After discussion with the agents and secretarial staff, we set up three sections. Departments established were: administrative and agriculture, 4-H Club work, and homemaking and consumer marketing.

Two secretaries were assigned to the agriculture and administrative department. One is the office manager, in charge of all secretaries. The

county director and two agents in agriculture make up the administrative and agriculture section.

Two secretaries were assigned to the 4-H Club department, which has three agents. Two secretaries were assigned to the home economics department, which has two home agents and a consumer marketing agent.

Using the principle that there should be a clear-cut definition of responsibility and procedures, an office procedure manual was developed. This outlines extension policy; personnel information such as sick leave, vacation, medical care, merit program, and personnel rating; reception procedure for phone and office calls; mailing procedures; ordering supplies and publications; scheduling rooms and equipment; agents' responsibilities; and secretarial responsibilities. In addition, a job description is included for each secretarial position.

## *Secretarial Setup*

The general office layout is grouped so that one secretary is always available to each department. Bulletins and files for each department are located in the vicinity of those agents' offices.

Each secretary and agent has a phone available and each agent has an individual office. We have four outside phone lines. Phones are used as intercoms within the office. All calls are relayed by a secretary in the administrative office. An intercom system is located beside the receptionist so that she can locate agents in the building but temporarily away from their desks.

Secretarial efficiency is increased by having adequate office equipment and machines. One room at the back of the building houses mimeoscope, mimeograph, addressograph, collator, electric stapler, and folding machines. This cuts down noise and confusion.

The room is laid out so that there is a continuous sequence from mimeograph to folder. Two work tables, with wheels, are available to move folded mail back to secretaries' desks, where they can prepare envelopes for mailing.

## *Comparing Notes*

Weekly office conferences of the nine extension staff members and the office manager are held. The office manager is the liaison between secretaries and professional staff. Secretarial conferences, held monthly by the office manager, are sometimes attended by the county director.

At both conferences, office procedures and efficiency are stressed. Agents are expected to program their work on a weekly (or longer) basis with their secretaries.

The office manager has the responsibility of seeing that all orders, requisitions, payrolls, vacation forms, monthly reports, and forms are completed on time.

The ultimate in efficiency will probably never be reached. But good personnel with clearly defined responsibilities and an adequately equipped physical layout have done much to improve the efficiency of our office. They have also made it a more desirable place to work.

## DEMANDS FOR TIME

*(From page 64)*

not enough on others. I expect we'll always be striving to find the balance for the many activities we crowd into a day.

Office conferences, working cooperatively with other Extension Service personnel, and developing and training leaders are certainly not new "tricks of the trade." But they serve as a means of aiding agents in meeting the demands for their time.

As we meet changes in the extension program, we will probably find ourselves altering plans and the use of our time. Past experiences and the consequences of our time management can help us make management decisions. But I'm sure we'll find that professional improvement, travel, research surveys, inservice training, and evaluation are all going to equip us to do a better job of planning our work and working the plan.



# A Good Filing System Saves Time

by C. T. HALL, Johnson County Agricultural Agent, Kansas

**A**TENTION to detail has never been one of my virtues. Whenever possible, work that included any amount of detail was always delegated to others.

Filing was no exception. Whenever material needed to be filed, it was turned over to the secretary to decide where. She, of course, was expected to be able to find it.

This did not seem like too bad a system as it had worked in Johnson County for nearly 40 years. It worked because we never had anything better. There is an old cliché that reads, "One never misses what one has never had."

The filing system was rather simple. We had a file folder for every project or activity in the county. In this file we kept correspondence and reference material.

Each 6 months, the secretary would discard all correspondence 6 months old or over unless it referred to money or a controversial matter. The latter were always kept. This left the files in fair shape but it was time consuming.

I readily accepted when John Gant, FES office management specialist, and Paul Griffith, associate director in Kansas, offered to establish a uniform filing system in John-

son County. This was to be used as a demonstration for all Kansas agents. I knew it would be lots of work, but it would be a big change—all for the better.

One of the first steps was to decide what primary subject titles we would have. To do this, we had to go through our entire filing system and classify or discard each piece of material. This took 2 weeks.

## Classifying Material

We found that we could break down the material into 43 main or primary subjects. These would vary in each county but here they are for Johnson County: Administration, Animal Husbandry, Association and Agencies, Awards, Boys and Girls Club Work, Clothing and Textiles, Committees, Communications, Consumer Information, Continuing Education, Crops and Soils, Dairy Husbandry, Engineering, Entomology, Events, Family Life, Farm Management, Foods and Nutrition, Forestry, Health, Home Crafts, Home Economics, Home Furnishings, Home Management, Horticulture, Landscaping, Laws and Legislation, Marketing, Plant Pathology, Poultry Husbandry, Programs of Work, Publications, Public Policy, Radio & Television, Recreation, Reports & Statistics, Rodent & Predator Control, Safety, Small Animals, Supplies & Equipment, Training-Teaching, Veterinary Medicine, Wildlife.

These primary subject titles were further broken down into secondary subject titles and also into tertiary (third place) divisions, where necessary.

Under the old system, reference material and correspondence were kept in the same file. Under the new system, a separate correspondence file was established. The same primary headings are used in both files.

Our next step was to prepare the file folders. Then we put the subject



Secretary Isabelle Hogan (left) and Home Agent Josephine Conley (right) check the secretarial and home economics files.

matter and correspondence material in their respective files.

Uniform filing presented a few problems:

- You have to definitely schedule time to go through every bit of material in your office. This means that the county agent, home economics agent, associate or assistant agent, 4-H agent, and secretaries must participate. Everyone must know what is going on. Unless all agree wholeheartedly to go along, I doubt if a uniform filing system will work. Everybody must understand and use it 100 percent; otherwise, it will not be successful.

- You must decide, with guidance from the State office, what reference material should be filed in the agricultural agent's office, the assistant agent's office, the home economics agent's office, 4-H Club agent's office, and in the files designated for the secretaries. It is essential that agents do this as they must code all future material for filing.

In the Johnson County office, the agricultural reference file is in the county agent's office. The home economics file and the secretary's file are in the reception office, just

(See *Good Filing*, page 76)



County Agent Tom Hall uses his agricultural file.

# Training Your Office Secretary

by NEAL DRY, Assistant to the Director, Louisiana

**T**ODAY'S county office secretary could be classified aptly as the extension agent's assistant. In a modern county office, her role requires more than a sufficient knowledge of the basic skills of typing and shorthand.

Taking dictation, transcribing notes, and filing, as essential as they are, are by no means the most important functions of the extension secretary. She must act as a public relations agent, serve as office manager by coordinating assigned tasks, assume responsibility for time-consuming tasks which agents would otherwise perform, and must be alert to prevent and correct errors in correspondence and reports.

## Develop Initiative

As she is not in direct contact with State office supervision and her immediate bosses are often in the field, she must learn to develop initiative. The county secretary who is allowed and encouraged to develop initiative is a more zealous and loyal subordinate.

In Louisiana, the extension program for clerical workers encourages

each parish secretary to develop initiative. The program provides the secretary with a thorough knowledge of the extension organization, its objectives, functions, and finances.

Through this training, the secretary becomes acquainted with the director and the State office supervisors. She is briefed on the functions of the Experiment Station and its relation to Extension. The secretary is encouraged to feel that she is an integral part of Extension and that Extension is an employee-centered organization.

Her general proficiency in performing routine tasks is strengthened through a handbook containing information on forms to use, number of forms to be prepared, where these forms are sent, travel regulations, etc. The handbook also contains a copy of the State Civil Service regulations and a copy of the Federal pamphlet on penalty mail privileges.

Developing the secretary's attitude toward her work is a significant phase of training. Improvement in attitude can be accomplished by providing pleasant working conditions, creating a sense of job security, train-

ing the county agent and secretary to recognize their working interdependence, and acquainting the secretary with the policies and regulations of the organization. When aptitude and attitude are improved, the secretary will have satisfied the prerequisites for developing initiative.

## Training Sessions

Three district training meetings were planned to achieve the overall objective of developing initiative. The entire parish staffs attended these 1-day meetings.

Two districts met on the University campus. This gave the secretaries an opportunity to visit the State office and learn the mode of operation.

Goals of the training sessions were to encourage the secretary to know, understand, and feel like a part of the organization; to acquaint the secretary with the State administrative staff; and to improve her knowledge of the basic operation of an extension office.

The agenda was planned around the following five major topics.

**Meet the Director**—The director discussed the vital role a secretary plays in the county office as a public relations agent as well as a clerical worker. He emphasized that her willingness to help others and her receptive attitude contribute materially to the success of the extension program.

**The Extension Organization**—The group was briefed on the history and philosophy of the Extension Service and the land-grant college system.

**Handbook**—The personnel director explained the contents of the handbook and how it could be used to best advantage. He also discussed office space management, filing, telephone courtesy, and public relations.

**Know Your Business Office**—The assistant to the director (finance)

(See Training, page 78)



Louisiana secretaries get first-hand instruction from J. E. Knight, assistant to the director, on how to fill out expense accounts and other forms.





by **HAROLD E. CARLEY**, *Assistant 4-H Club Leader*, and **WALLACE E. WASHBON**, *Assistant State Leader of County Agricultural Agents*,  
New York

**S**TAFF is an important word. In Bible times it meant a strong stick that gave the shepherd reliable support. Today the word "staff" indicates a group of people, with administrative or executive duties, who support the person in command. Your success as an extension agent, for example, may be largely dependent on the support you receive from your staff.

Behind nearly every outstanding extension agent is a capable, well-trained agent staff, supported by an efficient, conscientious secretarial staff. Even a good agent is almost helpless without the services of a good secretarial staff.

### ***Important Role***

A good secretary is one who is not only a capable office worker but an effective public relations representative for her employer. If the visitor is greeted in a tidy, pleasant-looking office by a cheerful, neat receptionist who sees that the purpose of his call is satisfied, an atmosphere of cooperativeness and good will is created. Even angry callers can be mollified by a tactful secretary.

On the other hand, if the office is disorderly and the secretary in-

different, the atmosphere suggests that visitors are not welcome. The obvious conclusion drawn by a visitor is that the office reflects the agent's personality and attitude toward his job.

Do the members of your county staff consider themselves public relations representatives? Have you ever expressed to them your expectation that to act in this capacity is an important part of their job? Have you ever made helpful suggestions or actually trained them in the techniques of meeting the public?

By increasing her knowledge of some subject-matter areas, an extension secretary can greatly enhance her value as an office assistant. If the secretary can provide a bulletin in answer to an inquiry and discuss how it can be used to solve the problem, there may be no need for the caller to see the agent. A secretarial staff that functions in this way is no accident. It is a result of the ability and interest of a secretary, coupled with training and delegation of responsibility by the agent, plus their mutual confidence.

Every agent must multiply his or her influence through others. An agent's secretary can expand his accomplishment by following her

delegated tasks or responsibilities to completion. Many secretaries have become master reminders of matters that may later become important "problems" for agent attention.

Each assistant agent or secretary must be assigned specific responsibilities. These are best carried out if they are grouped homogeneously to avoid uncertainty and overlapping.

A county agent who learns how to delegate responsibility will increase his effectiveness. Effort spent in developing one's understanding of this phase of administrative work will pay big dividends.

One common difficulty encountered in delegating work is the seeming unreliability of an assistant to carry out the assignment. But the fault may lie in the agent's inability to let the assistant carry out an assignment on his own.

Continual close supervision and frequent repossession of authority is worse than no delegation at all. It merely frustrates the helper, weakens his initiative, and undermines his self-confidence.

Staff members should also be given sufficient authority to prevent their being handicapped in carrying out assignments.

### ***Team Approach***

The efficiency of an office staff is derived from the combined personalities of its members, as well as their talents, expectations, and satisfactions. The successful agent must use the abilities and expectations of each member of his agent and secretarial team to provide satisfaction for each.

The team concept has been used with success by many agents. Regular staff conferences, with agents and secretaries presenting ideas and plans for improved work methods and new projects, help form a better integrated unit. The team knows why certain changes are necessary, why priorities and deadlines are important. And vital to the success of a team is the county agent, for every team must have an accepted leader.

The difference between a secretarial position and a clerical one is mainly responsibility. A secretary is

*(See Door to Success, page 74)*

# TRAIN AND RETAIN

by MRS. CELESTE A. R. BENITEZ,  
*Administrative Officer, Puerto Rico*

**H**ow can we train our secretaries? How can we keep them after they are trained? These are two problems we face in Puerto Rico in developing a secretarial force.

Our answer to the problems is a continuous training program. And training leadership is provided by supervisors' secretaries.

The State extension office in Puerto Rico has 38 secretaries. Another 100 secretaries work in the 68 county offices. For supervisory purposes Puerto Rico is divided into 8 zones, each under the direction of a supervisor for county agents and a supervisor for home agents, with their secretaries.

## *Need for Training*

One major problem in developing our secretarial staff is the difficulty of recruiting persons with sufficient education to handle the work in a county office. This situation is aggravated by the lack of good educational facilities or colleges in the smaller towns on the island. In the larger cities where there is a chance to get better stenographers, we must compete with better-paid positions in private industry.

In this situation, we keep a constant training program in operation to equip and retain secretaries.

Working conditions in the county offices are different than at the State office. So we follow a different system in training the two groups. This article deals only with the training of county secretaries and preparing them to assist county agents so that the latter may devote more time to their educational responsibilities.

Training in the county offices is done mainly by the supervisors' secretaries. They are trained in supervision of county secretaries. The supervisors' secretaries are brought periodically into the State office and are kept posted in the latest developments in office practice. And, during county visits, they observe good practices developed in certain offices and pass this information along to other counties.

When first appointed, the future county secretary is sent to the supervisor's office for 4 or 5 days training. She then reports to her county office. As soon as possible after that, the supervisor's secretary visits her and continues to visit her periodically.

Sometimes the new employee is sent to a pilot office for training. This is one where the secretary is an experienced employee who keeps her office up-to-date through the best methods and standards in office management.

In their visits to counties, supervisors' secretaries observe actual filing, watch secretaries interview callers, answer telephone calls, etc. One point specifically stressed is the importance of public relations and how the secretary can win good will. Proper care of equipment and what to do in emergency cases are also emphasized.

Extension agents often are present during these visits and get acquainted with the information given to their secretaries. In this way they are aware of what they can expect from secretaries.

## *Office Aids*

Aside from this the secretary's work is simplified through the use of a uniform filing system, standardized forms for reporting, methods for better storage of publications and supplies, and devices for simplifying recordkeeping. A mimeographed table lists all forms, reports, and information to be sent from the county offices, dates for submittal, number of copies, and destination.

Secretaries are given what we call *Carpeta de Informacion* (Information Manual) containing the Guide for Extension Workers, letters establishing policies, the finance manual, mailing privilege regulations, and other printed information.

The county secretary is trained to answer telephone calls and visitors and refer them to the agent when necessary. Experienced workers can give callers non-technical information. Secretaries are instructed to read extension publications to keep up with information.

This is how we try to develop the county secretary into a useful assistant for the county agent, one on whom he can rely to take care of office matters. The girl can well become the right hand of her superior—an invaluable asset for a person with a heavy work load.

The Puerto Rico Extension Service has proposed a reorganization of its field staff next July. Then more than ever will a good secretary prove of real help to her boss, relieving him of office and other details and providing him with that extra time for his new assignments.

## **DOOR TO SUCCESS**

*(From page 73)*

expected to assume responsibility if the agent will let her. But she cannot unless she has enough assistance to free her from the clerical duties.

When an office does not have an adequate secretarial staff, agents are required to do routine office work. This is obviously inefficient use of agents' time.

The time required to analyze the work involved in projects, activities, and events is well spent. Outlining what, when, where, and how work is to be done and who will do it saves time and avoids misunderstandings and duplication of effort. Written outlines of specific jobs are especially helpful when there is a change in personnel.

Few agents question the importance of a good secretarial staff. Good secretarial staffs are trained, should be carefully nurtured, and frequently praised.

How many months has it been since you complimented your secretary for a job well done, for her skillful handling of a difficult situation? How long since you asked her opinion on a decision that you must make or told her how important she is to you in your career?

Your staff is your key to success!



# Training for



## service

by **DANIEL C. PFANNSTIEL**, Assistant Director, and **MARY COTHRAN**, Assistant District Home Demonstration Agent, Texas

**S**MOOTHER office operation and greater service to the citizens of their State. That's what Texas county agents and secretaries believe will result from their recent training in new and improved office management procedures.

The first steps toward this goal were taken when county personnel, secretaries, district agents, and headquarters staff participated in one of 43 subdistrict training meetings. All training was provided by the same team of instructors.

A special State committee on office management training established guidelines for the training. This committee recommended the per-

sonnel to be involved, subject matter to be taught, size of groups, and duration of the training sessions.

County extension workers previously had received occasional training in office procedures but their secretaries had not been included. The committee decided that secretaries should be trained at the same time as the county agents. This proved to be a real strength. The agents and secretaries, in each other's presence, were committed to a new and improved set of office procedure standards.

First, the committee members met informally with several groups of agents and secretaries to learn what they would like to gain from the training. These valuable suggestions were incorporated into the program.

One feeling prevailed: training of this nature often is concerned with generalities, leaving out specific application of the principles. County personnel asked for specific examples of office techniques and procedures and the specific approach was taken in developing the training program.

### Filing Pointers

Filing and general office management were the two main considerations in this training. Filing training was based on the Uniform Filing Guide for County Extension Offices, developed at the State headquarters. Each participant received a copy of the guide and detailed instructions for establishing and operating the new office file classification system (a subject-numeric system). Subject-matter specialists contributed to the development of the guide by formulating the file outlines for their respective fields.

Each county was provided a set of filing materials, including prepared guide cards and guide card folders for each subject heading listed in the guide and extra materials for the local establishment of case files. These materials were furnished each extension office for immediate installation of a central file.

A reference source, The County Extension Office Handbook, was issued to each secretary in the training sessions. Each county office without a secretary also received a copy.

The handbook is divided into tab-indexed sections. One section gives a brief history of Texas extension work which is aimed at the orientation of new agents and secretaries. Another deals with public relations and its importance in serving the educational needs of office callers.

One section discusses the conduct of office conferences, arrangement of facilities, handling telephone and office callers, preparation of mailing lists, letter writing, punctuation, mimeographing, typing, personal appearance, office habits, publication display and storage, and other office matters. Still another section summarizes travel regulations and includes examples of travel forms properly prepared.

A section on reports contains examples of the correct preparation and submission of report forms. Procedures for requesting supplies and publications are discussed in other sections of the handbook.

The handbook is a loose-leaf book to which additions and changes can be made easily. Although it contains some historical and philosophical information, it emphasizes specific operational techniques.

The committee decided to limit the training sessions to 25 or 30 participants, thereby encouraging free discussion and questioning. Although there was much subject matter to be covered, the training sessions lasted only one day each.

### Followup Planned

Response to this total training program has been enthusiastic. A common expression is that this type of training was long overdue and that it should be continued. So the State committee is planning followup training, including a procedure for instructing all new personnel in office management.

Here's how Director John E. Hutchison summarizes the results of this program: "This training has done more to increase the overall efficiency and effectiveness of Texas extension personnel in providing first-class educational services to the people we serve than any other single effort we have ever undertaken."

## GOOD FILING

(From page 71)

outside the home economics agent's office. The 4-H file is in the club agent's office.

The secretary's file contains all correspondence by subject matter and also reference material relative to Administration, Association & Agencies, Awards, Committees, Communications, Continuing Education, Laws & Legislation, Programs of Work, Publications (lists), Radio & Television, Reports & Statistics, Safety, Supplies & Equipment, and Training & Teaching.

### *Noted Improvements*

This new filing system has improved our office in many ways.

It has increased our sense of security. No longer do we look and wonder where we have filed something. Each agent in the office codes his own material and correspondence and the secretaries file it according to code. No longer can the secretary be blamed for misplaced material.

We have more satisfied callers. When someone calls and the agent is out, everyone in the office knows exactly where the reference material is and can get it.

It saves time because everything is indexed in a file classification manual. Copies of the manual are kept by each agent and secretary.

All obsolete material is discarded instead of filed. In going through our old filing system, nearly half the material on hand was discarded.

Duplications are eliminated in the file. This means less filing space as only up-to-date information is kept. When new research material is received, the old is discarded.

We have used this filing system for a year and are looking forward to more improvement in the years to come.

In any good filing system, there are about three main steps that must be followed. Each agent must read and classify all material pertaining to his phase of the work. All material must be coded and indexed in the classification manual. This sounds like a time-consuming chore but it takes less time than hunting

for something you can't find. All coded material must be properly filed. If it is not coded, don't file it—burn it.

We all resist change. But if the change is for the better, I say try it. I firmly believe that a uniform filing system would be a great improvement in any extension office.

## SAVE TIME

(From page 60)

suggest themselves. Plans germinate. This is the subconscious mind working at its best.

Another time concept which should be woven into our time-use philosophy is selection in the use of our time. We need to work out a practical, personal pattern of living.

It is not always the work we do that tires us. Sometimes it is the work we do not get done. If we cultivate better use of our personal qualities, we will eliminate the hangover of some of our unfinished tasks.

### *Flexibility Helps*

Ability to adjust to change is a resource frequently used interchangeably with time and money.

An attitude of wanting to make changes makes a big difference. Are we self-satisfied? Will a change help? We need to develop initiative to try new ideas.

Knowledge is the resource which makes thinking pay. Knowing sources of help and how to make use of them is as important as the factual knowledge we possess.

You can increase the value of your time and your energy by expanding your interests, developing your potential abilities, and increasing your knowledge. Each of us has what might be termed "gold mines" within us in the form of undeveloped skills and abilities. When you feel that you are running short on time and energy, try investing some in the development of these too often "undeveloped" resources.

Decisions made by extension workers have far-reaching results. Time, energy, and other personal resources, as well as public resources, are the threads by which the fabric of our teaching is woven. The use we make

of them will determine our daily living and working pattern.

As extension workers, we must always be mindful of the fact that we are teachers and leaders by precept as well as by example. Our real value is determined by what we know, how well we know it, and how effective we are in our human relations and teaching.

The greatest aim of Extension is to "develop human beings." This is the essence of that challenge to us that keeps urging and inspiring us to bigger achievements.

## STRETCH DOLLARS

(From page 66)

at the warehouse each month. Is it worth the time and effort? Yes, if it meets the needs and desires of the county staff.

To be impartial and unbiased, suppose we refer again to the questionnaire responses. For past and anticipated attendance, note the frequency of attendance: once, 34 percent; twice, 33 percent; three times, 20 percent; four times, 9 percent; and five times, 2 percent.

Since participation is optional, the 57 agents that have taken this opportunity must be reasonably well pleased.

Do you plan to continue attendance if the opportunity is provided? To this question 72 percent replied yes, 17 percent said no, and 11 percent didn't respond.

Director Wilbur B. Wood says, "The cooperation and relationships with the State Agency for Property Utilization have been excellent. An examination of the results of the study made with Ohio agents indicates clearly general acceptance of this program. With this acceptance, plans are now made for a continuation of the program. Extension Service in Ohio has benefited by this program."

Walter G. Rhoten, Chief, Ohio State Agency for Property Utilization says, "State extension staffs interested in developing a cooperative program to acquire Federal surplus property for county extension offices should discuss the matter with the chief administrative officer of the land-grant colleges."



# Facts at Your Fingertips

by P. H. DeHART, Assistant Director, Virginia

EXTENSION administrators in Virginia believe that every staff member can satisfactorily interpret rules, regulations, and policy statements, and will cheerfully abide by them if fully informed. They have placed this responsibility upon individual employees and have found that handbooks save a lot of detailed work.

Pioneer workers understood the Smith-Lever law, the memoranda of understanding, and relationships with fellow workers because they grew up with them. They developed administrative policies and philosophies through experience. Many of these policies were never written. They were handed down through association.

## Need Recognized

This vocal system worked well during the first 25 years because additions to the staff were few and the turnover was small. However, in recent years many additions have been made to the staff and the turnover has been more rapid.

Now there is a need for reference material on the laws, regulations, and policies for staff members to use in keeping themselves informed. To

meet this need, Virginia has developed an Administrative Handbook.

The entire staff was given an opportunity to participate in the preparation of the handbook. A committee representing the administrative and supervisory staff assembled all of the important written and unwritten laws, rules, memoranda of understanding, and policies.

Then they developed a handbook outline which was reviewed by administrators, supervisors, and representative specialists and county agents. Each section of the final outline was assigned to the best qualified member of the staff for preparation.

A preliminary copy of the handbook was sent to all members of the staff with a request that they review it and submit suggested changes. After 1 year's use in preliminary form, the handbook was revised slightly, printed, and distributed to the staff.

The handbook has since been revised to include more detailed information in certain sections and other changes are likely to be made in the future. Revision does not present any serious problem because the handbook is of loose-leaf design.

It is difficult to tell how much the handbook aids office management because it contributes not only to

efficient procedure but also to personnel management through better understanding. A single source for important operating procedures reduces confusion, creates confidence, and saves time. It has resulted in at least 75 percent reduction in correspondence in certain areas of operation.

In addition, answering questions or furnishing instructions by referring to a section in the handbook saves time. This is particularly true when the answer would require a one or two-page letter and the inquiry can be satisfactorily answered by a notation, "See Section X of the Handbook."

## Idea Adopted

Secretaries at headquarters, with the approval of the Director, formed an organization to bring about a better understanding of the duties, responsibilities, and established procedures for secretaries. Newly employed secretaries were inexperienced with penalty privilege, preparation of travel expense vouchers, monthly reports, where and how to get supplies, and many other procedures. Secretaries with longer tenure also felt a need for some type of handbook similar to the Administrative Handbook but prepared to meet the needs of secretaries.

The desirability for such a handbook was presented to the Director and approval was granted. The chair-

(See *Fingertip Facts*, page 78)



Virginia's Administrative Handbook answers extension staff questions on policies, procedures, and regulations.

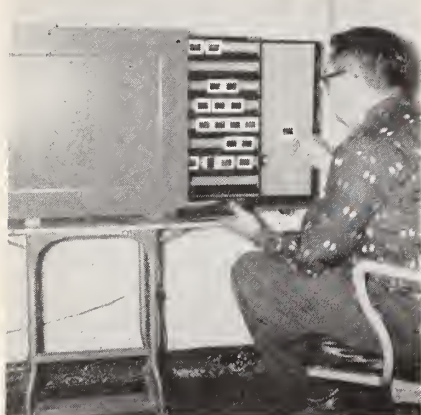


Handbook for Extension Secretaries puts clerical work procedures clearly and concisely at the fingertips.

## TIME-SAVING TIPS

(From page 69)

To store slides, they secured a steel filing cabinet which holds 1800 slides. Slides are grouped by subject matter and kept current.



For storage of TV poster material, a special cabinet was built with large and small drawers for various size posters. Materials used for making posters is kept in the same cabinet.

## RADIO-EQUIPPED CARS

Phillips County, Ark., extension agents are installing two-way radio in their cars. Phillips, a Delta County bordered by the Mississippi River, extends more than 100 miles from northern to southern borders. Two-way radio will increase agents' effectiveness, especially during the busy summer season.

Agents are keeping a record of every message. These will be evaluated to reflect time and mileage saved and other benefits.

## SERVICE COUNTER

An entrance counter is a time saver in the Calhoun County, Mich. extension office. The clerical staff often can serve visitors without disturbing the agent. If the visitor wants to discuss a problem with an agent, of course he is invited into the agent's office.

The counter also is a handy place to receive and record soil samples. And the inevitable "soil siftings" are confined to one area rather than distributed on several desks.

County Director Burrell Henry says the counter also causes the public to pause by their bulletin display. Visitors profitably utilize their waiting time and this in turn increases bulletin distribution.

## UTILIZING SPACE

Are you using the space above your filing cabinets? Alameda County, Calif. advisors are. They built a wooden frame to hold magazines at a convenient slope, with a shelf above for often-used books. This dual-purpose rack, they report, is both useful and attractive.

## POSTER AID

Need a large poster? New Mexico's staff artist uses an opaque projector to blow up smaller drawings. She projects the drawings to the size wanted, then traces them on poster paper.

## FINGERTIP FACTS

(From page 77)

man of the secretaries organization appointed a handbook committee.

Their first step was to prepare an outline which was sent to all secretaries with a request that they make suggestions for changes or additions. The committee summarized the suggestions and prepared a final outline. Again various sections were assigned to the best qualified persons on the staff for preparation. The administrative staff, auditors, and others helped supply information.

The preliminary handbook was sent to all secretaries in the State office and to selected secretaries in the county offices for review and suggestions. These suggestions were summarized and, where feasible, incorporated into the final copy of the handbook. It was then printed and distributed to all secretaries.

## Timesaver

The handbook, well-received by secretaries, has proved to be a valuable part of each secretary's office. She has at her fingertips a clear, con-

cise manual of working procedures. It is a timesaver in that it eliminates asking her supervisors many questions. Because it brings a lot of information together in one place, it eliminates many steps to the files.

This publication has been and will continue to be valuable to all secretaries and particularly the newly employed. It will enable them to carry out their duties in a much more efficient manner with a far shorter training period.

Both handbooks, because of their information and loose-leaf style, will be useful for many years. They are valuable for speeding up routine jobs and for guiding new workers in extension policies or philosophies.

## TRAINING

(From page 72)

discussed expense accounts, annual and sick leave regulations, hospitalization insurance, and other business office procedures. He answered questions from the group as the meeting progressed.

Extension Programs—The district agents concluded the program by discussing parish programs and the secretary's role in carrying them out. Specific administrative matters needing attention in their respective districts were also discussed.

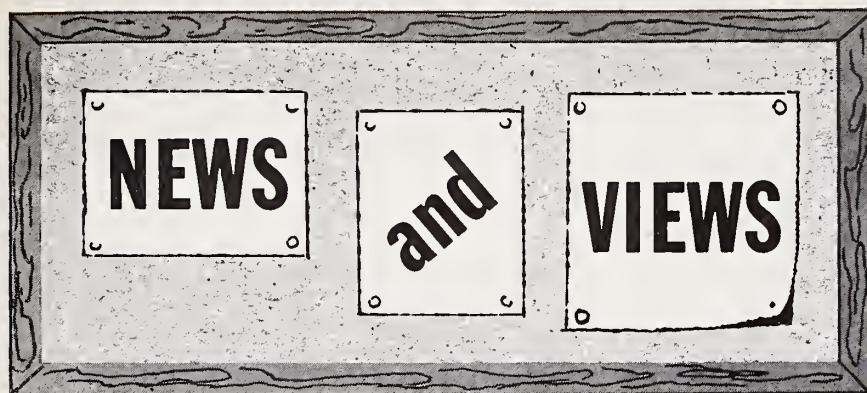
## Continuing Aids

A followup study revealed that the handbook has been of definite value both to new and experienced secretaries. With the aid of a comprehensive reference on office forms and regulations, the secretary improved her general proficiency.

Although the secretary receives extensive training in form and policy, she must be given assistance in planning and organization of office responsibilities. This is done by the agent. The staff's attitudes, mode of operation, and work assignments are vital to development of the secretary's work attitudes and habits.

Good office relations can only be effected when the staff recognizes that the secretary-agent relationship is a "give and take" program requiring cooperation, planning, and organization.





## Michigan State Plans Summer Institute

Michigan State University announces a special Summer Institute for extension workers, June 21 through July 28.

Credit for courses taken at this Institute may be applied toward advanced degrees.

Three term credits may be earned in the class on Program Development, Implementation, and Evaluation in the Cooperative Extension Service. A course in Research and Special Studies in Cooperative Extension Work is also featured.

Additional courses available include: Contemporary Communities, Soil Fertility and Fertilizers, Sociology of Education, Modern American Society, Rural Electrification, Principles of Public Relations, Patterns of Food Selection, Agricultural Marketing, Rural Sociology, Agricultural Policy, Land Economics, Persuasive Speaking, and Family Finance.

For more information write Dr. George H. Axinn, Institute for Extension Personnel Development, Michigan State University, East Lansing, Mich.

## Monthly Revisions in Publications Inventory

The following new titles should be added to the Annual Inventory List of USDA Popular Publications. Bulletins that have been replaced should be discarded. Bulk supplies of publications may be obtained under the procedures set up by your publication distribution officer.

- F 684 Squab Raising—Revision 1960
- F 767 Goose Raising—Slight Revision 1960
- G 64 Subterranean Termites—Their Prevention and Control in Buildings—New (Replaces F 1911 and the part of F 1993 regarding Termite Control)
- L 455 The Pickleworm—How to Control it on Cucumber, Squash, Cantaloupe, etc.—New
- L 462 The Bollworm—How to Control It—New
- L 464 Strawberry Clover—A Legume for the West—New

## Worldwide Extension Meetings Scheduled

Two international meetings of interest to extension workers are planned this summer in Wageningen, The Netherlands.

Methods and Program Planning in Agricultural and Home Economics Extension will be discussed at the first meeting July 5 through 29. The agenda will feature talks on program planning, effectiveness of various media, written and visual communications, lay leadership, youth work, evaluation, and related topics.

A meeting on Organization and Methods of Plant Protection is scheduled August 1 through 26.

Further information on both meetings may be obtained from The Director, International Agricultural Center, 1 General Foulkesweg, Wageningen, The Netherlands.

## Book Reviews

**INSECTS—HUNTERS AND TRAPPERS** and **STRANGE PLANTS AND THEIR WAYS** by R. E. Hutchins. Published by Rand, McNally & Co., New York City. 96 pp. each. Illus.

These two books on insects and plants should strengthen the 4-H entomology project. The 120 photographic reproductions are excellent, and the stories are interestingly written.

The book, *Insects—Hunters and Trappers*, reveals the habits of such insects as the doodle bug, firefly, assassin bugs, tiger beetles, praying mantes, and wasps, as well as the beetles and bugs of the water world.

The second book illustrates how

pitcher plants, Venus-flytraps, lady's slippers, and sundew plants trap and devour insects, why the jumping bean jumps, also how orchids, molds, lichens, mistletoe, and dodder live. The mystery of pollination and how plant seeds are spread by nature are portrayed.

The last chapter of each book relates to hints for young naturalists.—M. P. Jones, *Federal Extension Service*.

**DAIRY CATTLE JUDGING AND SELECTION** by William W. Yapp. Published by John Wiley and Sons, Inc., New York City. 324 pp. Illus.

Dr. Yapp says—"this cow may be said to have two sides: a physical and a functional. The two are inter-related, and they should be studied together. To neglect either is to fail to reach a full understanding of the animal and her complete role in the conduct of the dairy industry."

The author maintains that since less than 10 percent of the dairy cows have been tested for their production ability, most cows must be judged on physical conformation.

The book offers a broad and inclusive treatment of the physical characteristics of dairy cattle. Special emphasis is given to the functional relationship between dairy form and milk yield. Dr. Yapp includes a refreshing discussion on the qualities that characterize a good judge and what he calls creative judging and handling difficult judging situations.

Other aspects of purebred dairy cattle production covered include herd classification, junior projects, and fitting and exhibiting dairy cattle.—Richard E. Burleson, *Federal Extension Service*.

# *Plan Ahead for Good Office Layout*

by PHILIP E. BLOOM, Kittitas County Agent, Washington

**T**HE best way to plan an office layout in a new building is to approach it systematically. That's what we did before moving into new offices 3 years ago.

The planning should be done by the entire extension staff that will be using the facilities. And it should be closely coordinated with the architect and the board of county commissioners.

The first step is to assemble all facts available on such items as number of office calls, meetings held, number of square feet occupied in present offices, and an estimated number of square feet needed. This information will help materially when applying for space in the new building.

From this basic data, the architect and the commissioners can consider your request for space.

When the allocation of area in the building is made, office layout planning can start in earnest.

As a second step in the planning process, the staff should take inventory of resources available for their use. Then they should list their needs and what they desire to have included in the new office layout.

## *Office Plans*

The items listed by the Kittitas County staff were:

- A reception room, with a counter, bulletin display board and cabinet

for bulletin storage, desk for the receptionist, and space for all office files.

- A mimeograph room with a desk for a second stenographer. This room would contain all necessary office and mimeograph supplies. The stenographer in this room would not be distracted by office or telephone calls.

- Individual offices for each agent.
- A general meeting room to accommodate the majority of meetings conducted by extension and farm groups.

- A demonstration kitchen to be used in conjunction with the general meeting room.

- A radio recording room for use by extension and farm groups.

- A small room to store visual aids and other equipment.

## *Check and Recheck*

Following agreement among the staff as to office needs, a general layout of arrangements was developed with the architect. Considerable planning went into the layout so that it would be of greatest efficiency.

When the extension staff met with the architect the second time, the plans were reviewed and changes requested. This meeting with the architect was the most important as any major changes had to be made at this time.

The architect accepted the staff-suggested layout practically as developed. He stated that the extension group had more basic information available and knew their requirements better than any other department requesting space in the new building.

## *Cooperate on Ideas*

The third step is to follow the actual construction closely. Through the cooperation of the contractor, architect, and county commissioners, two or three minor changes were made during the actual construction of the building. This is not advised, however, and is much easier to accomplish if done prior to approval of the building plan.

With good basic facts available on the operation of an extension office, it was not difficult to secure favorable consideration of what the extension staff considered necessary.

The need for planning with the architect cannot be emphasized too much. To secure what a staff desires in a new office layout, the cooperation of the architect is essential. And he must understand the function and needs of the extension staff.

Our county extension office plan represents the efforts of the staff, the county commissioners, and the architect. After 3 years of occupying the quarters, everyone is well satisfied with the arrangement.